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# Letter dated 26 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the escalation of the situation in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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## Annex to the letter dated 26 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

## Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the escalation of the situation in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine

25 July 2016

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine is deeply concerned by the severe escalation of the security situation in the anti-terrorist operation (ATO) zone.

Just between 22 and 24 July 2016, militants supported by the Russian Federation fired 189 times towards the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Moreover, the Russia-backed militants continue the defiant and blatant use of weapons that should have long ago been withdrawn from the contact line in accordance with the Minsk agreements.

The positions of the Ukrainian army, as well as objects of civilian infrastructure, including houses of civilians, were shelled from 122 mm calibre cannons 89 times, from 120 mm calibre mortars 30 times, and from 82 mm calibre mortars 50 times. Six clashes occurred in the area of the Novozvanivka, Trudovskaya and Avdiyivka settlements, resulting in losses among the troops of the ATO forces.

The monitors continue to observe a large presence of Russian heavy weaponry near the contact line that should have been withdrawn in accordance with the Minsk agreements.

The purposeful escalation of the security situation occurs amid the Russian Federation's massive provision of military equipment, arms and ammunition and the deployment to Donbas of new mercenaries and military personnel of the Russian army.

Since early July 2016, 19 troop trains carrying weapons and military equipment have crossed the uncontrolled area of the Ukrainian-Russian State border from the side of the Russian Federation. Russia, in violation of international law and its commitment under arms export control, delivered 19 T-9 tanks, 3 "Grad" multiple rocket launchers, 2 self-propelled guns and 11 armoured personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles.

From the territory of the Russian Federation, 130 cisterns (6,600 tons) of fuels and lubricants and 14 wagons of ammunition (approximately 560 tons) were delivered. Additionally, 9 automobile columns, including, among others, 44 trucks with ammunition, 34 tank trucks and 77 motor vehicles, entered the temporarily uncontrolled territory.

Russian unmanned aerial vehicles thrice illegally crossed the Ukrainian-Russian border and, after completion of reconnaissance missions in Ukrainian airspace, returned to their bases on the territory of the Russian Federation.

There is a clear line of intimidation towards observers of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to

Ukraine, obstructing their efforts at monitoring and verifying in accordance with the mandate that was also approved by the Russian Federation.

The continuous restrictions for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission observers to access areas temporarily not under the control of Ukraine, including those adjacent to the Ukrainian-Russian border, the obstruction of the Mission's efforts by not providing permits for further expansion of its field presence in the uncontrolled territories, and the organization of paid-for and well-directed protests and "unarmed resistance" with the aim to obstruct the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission from properly performing its functions further confirm such a line.

It is quite evident that the thesis as to the so-called "internal Ukrainian" nature of conflict in Donbas, which the officials in Moscow are actively attempting to impose on the international community, is nothing but an attempt of the Russian Federation to divert, in any way possible, attention from its actual role as organizer, direct participant and a party to this conflict.

Such rhetoric by the Kremlin is confirmed by the position of the delegation of the Russian Federation at the Minsk talks, where it is trying to play the role of an outside observer and advocate of the illegal armed groups in certain areas of Donbas, instead of forcing them to implement the Minsk agreements in full.

Russia is demonstrating similar behaviour with regard to the agreements achieved in the "Normandy format", refusing to implement them or deliberately trying to distort their meaning. In particular, it concerns the framework principles of the withdrawal of forces along the contact line, the format of which was agreed upon by military advisers of this format on 15 and 16 June 2016.

We are forced to the conclusion that the militants' leaders in Donetsk and Luhansk and their Kremlin curators consciously choose the path towards the conflict's further escalation, instead of its peaceful settlement by way of a consistent implementation of the Minsk agreements.

It is clear that the armed provocations by the illegal armed groups would require decisive reaction in return by the Armed Forces of Ukraine in order to force the terrorists to abandon their plans of forced escalation.

Strictly adhering to its commitments, the Ukrainian side will continue doing everything possible to end the death of people in Donbas and to restore peaceful life, constitutional order and respect for human rights in the temporarily occupied areas.

We demand from the Russian Federation, as a party to the Minsk agreements, to urgently fulfil its obligations, to withdraw from the territory of Donbas its soldiers, mercenaries and weapons, to stop the illicit transfer of weapons and military equipment to militants, and to unblock the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission.

We appeal to our international partners to strengthen political and diplomatic pressure on the Kremlin in order to stop the dangerously escalating tensions in Donbas.